

accountability information [that is stored] includes an other portion of [a]the digital signature.

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46. (Once Amended) A method for certifying, according to claim 45, wherein the portions of the digital signature [can be combined to], when combined, prove that A, contributed to the certificate being issued.

REMARKS

This Amendment is being provided in response to the Office Action for this case dated July 30, 1996. The following remarks reflect and expand upon the points raised in the Office Action and upon the resulting amendments to the claims, set forth above.

In response to the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, Applicant has amended the claims herein in order to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Applicant has amended the claims to remove the word "can" from the claims. In addition, in the preambles of the independent claims, claims 1 and 23, Applicant positively recite that authorities certify data. This modification is supported by the specification which indicates throughout that authorities are entities that certify data. The claims have also been amended to remove all references to "levels of authorities", "first level of authority", "higher authority", and "higher level authority".

Lines 13-14 of independent claim 1 have been modified to clarify that the second authority is the subject of the verb "including" and part (d) of claim 1 has been modified to indicate that this step involves storing accountability information that renders the first level authority accountable. This accountability feature is described in the specification in a number of places. See, for example, the second paragraph of page 13.

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Claim 20 has been amended in order to clearly differentiate between information saved by the witness and the accountability information. Claim 23 has been amended in order to indicate that the authority A_n is the subject of the verb "including" in lines 16-17 of claim 23. In addition, part (e) of claim 23 has been modified in a manner similar to the modifications to claim 1, thus reciting storing accountability information that renders authority A_j accountable.

Applicant respectfully submits that the amendments to the claims contained herein address each and every specific point raised in the Office Action in connection with this rejection. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that this Amendment overcomes the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Based on the above Amendment and Remarks, Applicant respectfully requests that all the outstanding rejections and objections be withdrawn.

Favorable consideration and allowance are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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